GEMS OF WISDOM

Stories based on the principles of the Namdhari code of conduct

ਬਾਝੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਅੰਧ ਗੁਬਾਰਾ ॥

Without the Guru, there is complete darkness.

ਅਗਿਆਨੀ ਅੰਧਾ ਅੰਧੁ ਅੰਧਾਰਾ ॥

The ignorant ones are completely blind,

there’s only darkness for them.



Rehatnama

12th *Patshahi*

God is One. Blessings of the Satguru.

Written by (*Satguru*) Ram Singh, Salutations to the entire *Sangat*: Purity is of the God, Victory is of the God.

This code of conduct is written for the entire Sangat. Wake up in the ambrosial hours, go to answer the nature's call taking a pitcher along. Wash the pitcher twice. Answer the nature's call, taking off the clothes. Clean your teeth, then take bath. Recite *Bani*, if not memorized already, then memorize it; all the women, old and young aged persons should do. *Jap*, *Jaap*, *Hazare* of both, should be memorized. *Rehraas*, *Aarti Sohila* should definitely be memorized and everyone should keep patience. Meditate on the God's Name throughout the eight quarters of the day.

Others' daughters and sisters should be considered one's own. Guru Ji has already mentioned about others' rights that 'illegally claiming others' rights is similar to the forbidden pork being eaten by a Muslim, and beef by a Hindu.' If after taking the God's Name, one does not recite it, his face will be blackened in both the worlds. No one should speak foul. Forgive others, endure the insulting words of others, even if someone beats, endure it. Your protector is always the God. You should make sincere efforts to conceal your good qualities. Sing the praises of God together every day.

If you plan for a '*Yag*', then cleanse the enclosure. Bring new utensils. Enter the enclosure after washing feet and perform the '*Homa*'. First clean the enclosure where *Homa* is to be performed, bring the wood of *Brahma tree*

(*Butea monosperma*) or *Indian plum* (*Ziziphus mauritiana*). Do not blow air in the *Homa*. Spread the *Homa* fire by hand fan. In the *Homa*, five men should recite *Bani* from the *Pothis*; *Chaupai*, *Jap*, *Jaap*, *Chandi Charitra*, *Akal Ustat*[1]. The sixth man[2] should put the material. The seventh[3] should sprinkle water, thereafter, bit by bit. If anyone engages in forbidden actions like infidelity or theft, such a person should not be allowed in any congregations. If he is somebody powerful, then all should pray that such a person should not remain capable of coming.

My understanding is very less. You should yourself understand everything. Everyone should fold hands in front of God, 'O, *Maharaj*! Please keep me steadfast in my religion.' Everyone should keep the *Kachhera* (underpants in accordance with Sikh code of conduct), after putting on one side should the

other be removed.

No one should take money from a daughter or a sister, girls are not to be exchanged. Always keep reciting the God's Name.

Spread this order in the entire community that no one should marry a girl younger than fifteen or sixteen years. Never eat meat or drink alcohol. Always keep the fear of God with each breath.

...

[1] The order to recite Chandi di Vaar and Ugradanti in the Homa has been given by Satguru Hari Singh Ji.

[2,3] The sixth and seventh man should do Naam Simran.

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ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੇਲਾ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਉ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

Amrit Vela: The divine time (ambrosial moments, hours before the dawn) is that offering; the True Name of the God (chanted during the *Amrit Vela*, while remembering the Greatness of God) is that wording, by which 'Love' of God and realization of His 'True form' can be obtained.

ਕਰਮੀ ਆਵੈ ਕਪੜਾ ਨਦਰੀ ਮੋਖੁ ਦੁਆਰੁ ॥ ੪ ॥

With good deeds, the 'cloth' (symbolic of human body) is obtained, and with the Grace of God, one reaches the 'Gate of Liberation'

— **Guru Nanak Dev Ji**

“ **Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise**.

— Benjamin Franklin

(American polymath and the founding father of the United States)

A research conducted in Department of Pediatrics, Tokyo Kita Shakai Hoken Hospital, Japan concluded that early rising children are more active than late risers. The researchers concluded that promoting an early rising time is an important element of cultivating good health in young children.

Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment 2007 Dec; 3(6): 959–963.



The story is about saint Kabir, who got attached to God during the early years of his life. His habit of rising early made him a devotee of Guru Ramananda, which opened the doors of spirituality for him.

Child Kabir and the bath of ambrosial hours

In the town of Banaras flows a river. Two weavers, Nima and Niru used to come to the river for bathing everyday. One day, when the couple came near the river, they saw a big lotus flower. Upon looking closely, they found a baby boy lying upon a wooden support surrounded by lotus flowers. The couple was surprised to see this. Assuming that this baby may have been abandoned by his biological parents due to some issues, Nima and Niru brought the baby home. The baby was very beautiful. The couple started taking care of the baby in all ways. They named him 'Kabir'.



Nima and Niru found a baby lying on a wooden support

After a few years, the baby grew up started playing with his friends in the town. Child Kabir would leave his home after taking meals and return back in the evening after playing with his friends. One day while roaming around away from the main town, Kabir and his friends saw an *ashram* (hermitage). There many young boys were doing different activities.

Someone was cleaning the ashram, someone was washing the clothes, a few others were reading. In an isolated place, a sage was seated in a meditative state. His face was very charming. The aura of the place was enchanting.



Child Kabir asked one of the boys, 'What is this place and who that sage is? What is he doing? His lips are moving but we do not hear any sound. What is he saying?'

Guru Ramananda engaged in meditation

The boy replied, 'This is an *ashram*. Pupils from different places come here to learn about the mind and soul. The sage there is Guru Ramananda. He is engaged in deep meditation, which he practices for many hours, starting from very early in the morning. He is chanting *Guru mantar* (sacred word said in praise of God and received from a spiritual guide). It is not spoken aloud and repeated in the lips in such a way that it is audible only to oneself and not to others.' Child Kabir was mesmerized to know this.

He further enquired, 'When does he start meditating? I also want to come along'.

‘During the ambrosial hours! When the stars are still fully visible in the night! When all the birds, animals and humans are still asleep in their dreams! When the only light that shows the path is that of the moon! When there is no disturbance anywhere. At that time, Guru Ramananda wakes up, takes his bath in the river, comes back and sits in meditation to talk with the God’.

‘Talk with the God?’ Child Kabir was spellbound. ‘Yes’, said the boy.

‘Can I also sit for meditation?’ Kabir enquired.

‘For meditation, one needs to know a *Guru mantar*. This word is repeated a number of times. After a long, untiring and mindful practice with utmost concentration, one starts to feel its power. This is not given simply to anyone. We do not know what kind of a person are you? What is your level? What kind of a routine you follow? Whether you are suitable to get *Guru mantar* or not, we don’t know. This is not a child’s play.’ Saying this, the boy left away to resume his routine work in the *ashram*.

Child Kabir was both excited and disappointed. The words of the boy resonated in his ears. He desired to practice meditation like Guru Ramananda. He vowed to change his habits and lead a disciplined life.

Upon reaching home, child Kabir said to his mother, ‘Please give my food. I need to eat and then go to sleep early’.

Kabir’s mother was surprised, but happy at the same time.

She said, 'You always run away from meals. You have never asked for food yourself earlier. You keep playing for long hours and take meals late in the evening. How has this transformation happened to you?'

Child Kabir did not say anything on this. His mind was fully absorbed in the thoughts of Guru Ramananda. From that day onwards, Kabir started waking up during the ambrosial hours, when everyone else would be asleep. There used to be no chatter of the birds chirping or dogs barking. Slowly, he would open the door and slip away to go to the river.



Child Kabir started waking up during the ambrosial hours

He first used to brush his teeth and then take bath. He used to notice Guru Ramananda coming every day on the riverbank, walking down the stairs to take bath in the river and then going back to his *ashram*. He used to observe all this from a distance. Guru Ramananda always used to whisper the *Guru mantar* in his lips, and did not talk to anybody on his way or while taking the bath.

Child Kabir started wondering as to how he could take *Guru mantar* from Guru Ramananda. Kabir thought that when Guru Ramananda would come to take bath, it would be a good opportunity to take *Guru mantar* since only a very few people come to the river bank at that time. However, the problem was that Guru Ramananda did not talk at all during the ambrosial hours.

Child Kabir thought of a plan. Next day, he went again to the river bank as usual. But this day, he went much earlier. After taking his bath, he lied down on the stairs, through which Guru Ramananda used to come down to the river for a bath. There was dark all around. Things were visible only in the dim light of the stars shining above. After sometime, Guru Ramananda came there, started walking down the stairs, while whispering the name of God. Suddenly, his feet touched the body of Kabir, and in surprise, the *Guru mantar* got spoken aloud unintentionally by Guru Ramananda. This way, child Kabir got the *Gur mantar*, which was earlier denied to him.

This all was possible because Kabir changed his routine and understood the importance of ambrosial hours for the meditation. He adopted a disciplined lifestyle. In times to come, Kabir Ji became a great saint, receiving worldwide acclaim for his meditation and teachings.

ਭਗਤਿ ਭੰਡਾਰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਲਾਲ ॥

Guru's teachings are the treasure trove of devotion.

ਗਾਵਤ ਸੁਨਤ ਕਮਾਵਤ ਨਿਹਾਲ ॥ ੨ ॥

Those who sing, hear and act according to it are satiated.

— **Guru Arjan Dev Ji**

“ **ਕਲਿਜੁਗਿ ਨਾਵੈ ਕੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ**

In Kaliyug, only the God’s Name (as described by *Gurbani*) is the supreme.

— Bhai Gurdas
(Indian Sikh philosopher)

Researchers from India and England found that the emotions described in Gurbani can be utilized in clinical settings for better health outcomes.

Asian Journal of Psychiatry 2012; 5(4)



The story is about an illiterate Sikh, who was shown a simple way to memorize Gurbani by Satguru Gobind Singh Ji.

A pile of stones and Memorization of Gurbani

Once upon a time, Satguru Gobind Singh Ji happened to visit a village. People of that village and of the nearby villages enthusiastically came to have a glimpse of the great Guru. Seeing the enthusiasm of the people, Satguru Ji asked all the people to adopt good practices in life and to live a life according to the values given by Satguru Nanak Dev Ji. Satguru Gobind Singh Ji told the people to wake up and take bath during the ambrosial hours, meditate and then recite *Gurbani*. He asked the people to memorize *Gurbani*, so that they remember it at all times and do not wander away from the right direction. All the people nodded their heads in obedience.



Satguru Gobind Singh Ji asked all the people to memorize Gurbani

One of the persons came forward and said, 'Satguru Ji! I cannot read or write *Gurmukhi* (script). I can only speak it. Although I wish to accept your *Hukum* (order), but since I do not know the language properly, it would be impossible for me to do so.' Saying this, the Sikh bowed down his head in disappointment.

Satguru Ji said, 'Don't worry! Even if you memorize one line every day, you would be able to memorize a lot of *Gurbani* in some time.'

The Sikh said, 'Satguru Ji! I am an illiterate person. My mind is not sharp. I am very sorry, but I would not be able to do so.'

Satguru Ji asked the Sikh, 'What do you do for a living?'

The Sikh replied, 'I carry and sell building material like stones and bricks for house construction.'

Satguru Ji said, 'Okay! While going out, just keep one stone near your home. Remember! Only one stone every day.'

The Sikh nodded his head in agreement, but was thoroughly confused. 'What will these stones do to my memory?', he thought in his mind.

Nevertheless, he followed the *hukum* of Satguru Ji wholeheartedly. Every day, before going to work, he would take one stone and put at a corner near his home.

The days kept passing by and before he could realize, there was a big pile of stones ready.



The Sikh placed one stone each day

After some days, Satguru Ji happened to visit that village again. People came from all directions to see and listen to Satguru Ji. Satguru Ji went near the house of the illiterate Sikh this time. Looking at the pile of stones, Satguru Ji asked the people, 'How did this big pile of stones form at this place?'

Everyone was confused started looking at each other. The illiterate Sikh came forward and pleaded with folded hands , 'Satguru Ji! You had ordered me to place one stone every day near my home, the last time you visited the village. I have, from that day, placed one stone every day here.'

Satguru Ji remarked, 'But this pile got accumulated in no time!'

'Yes', said the Sikh, 'but Satguru Ji, I never placed more than one stone per day'.

To this, Satguru Ji said, 'Look! Just by keeping one stone each day at a particular place, a big pile of stones resulted. Similarly, if you memorize only one line of *Gurbani* each day, you would be able to memorize a lot of it in a few days.'

Everyone was mesmerized on noticing the sweet way by which Satguru Ji revealed the importance of regular and consistent efforts for the memorization of *Gurbani*. The Sikh was overwhelmed and heartily thanked Satguru Ji for making him understand the way, which otherwise he was not able to grasp earlier.

ਹਕੁ ਪਰਾਇਆ ਨਾਨਕਾ
ਉਸੁ ਸੂਅਰ ਉਸੁ ਗਾਇ ॥

Illegally taking things which belong to others is sin; for Muslims, it is like eating port, for Hindus, it is like eating beef.

ਗੁਰੁ ਪੀਰੁ ਹਾਮਾ ਤਾ ਭਰੇ
ਜਾ ਮੁਰਦਾਰੁ ਨ ਖਾਇ ॥

The spiritual guides will stand with only those
who do not eat carcasses
(do not make claim on others' rights)

— **Guru Nanak Dev Ji**

“ **Individual rights are the means of subordinating society to moral law.**

— Any Rand
(Russian writer and philosopher)

Experts opine that protecting others’ rights is an indispensable element of good citizen conduct.

"Individual Rights: Balance, Restrictions & the Common Good."

Study.com; November, 2019

This story is about an army cook, who wanted to illegally take away others’ rights and was brought to the right path by Satguru Ram Singh Ji.

Officer's breakfast and Others' rights

Satguru Ram Singh Ji used to work as a sepoy in the regiment of Kunwar Naunihal. Satguru Ji used to perform the army duty, while remaining engaged in meditation throughout the day. He taught the soldiers to be faithful to their country, adopt good practices and stopped them from doing evil things. Satguru Ji used to wake up very early, when the other soldiers would still be asleep. After bathing, Satguru Ji used to do *Naam-simran and Gurbani* recital. Thereafter, he used to cook his food himself and start the duties of the day. All other soldiers felt surprised and were inspired by the daily discipline and routine of Satguru Ji.

One day, the officer (*Subedar*) of the regiment was assigned an urgent task, for which he decided to leave early the next day. But the cook and some other soldiers partied in the night and slept very late. Next day as usual, Satguru Ji got up in the ambrosial hours. After taking bath, he did mediation and *Gurbani* recital. Meanwhile, the sun had risen. The birds started chirping, butterflies starting roaming around the flowers. Animals started moving in search of food. Cool breeze started flowing, the flowers started swinging and their scent filled the air with joy and enthusiasm. Satguru Ji headed towards the kitchen and took out the cooking pan which he had kept for himself. He collected some wood for fire, upon which, he placed the cooking pan. As Satguru Ji started to prepare the dough of wheat flour. the pan heated up



Satguru Ji lit the fire to prepare food

The whole atmosphere was filled with the sweet melodies of *koels* and the fragrance of flowers. But the cook and other soldiers were still sleeping. They were unaware about the beginning of the new day. In the meantime, crows started screaming and the dogs started barking. Their noise finally awakened the officer's cook. When he saw the bright sun rays falling directly over him, he rushed out of his bed in hurry and got very nervous. The officer had to leave early, but neither did he awake the officer nor he prepared breakfast for him. He got frightened and at once, rushed outside. He did not take any bath or even wash his hands and ran towards the kitchen to make arrangements for the officer's breakfast.

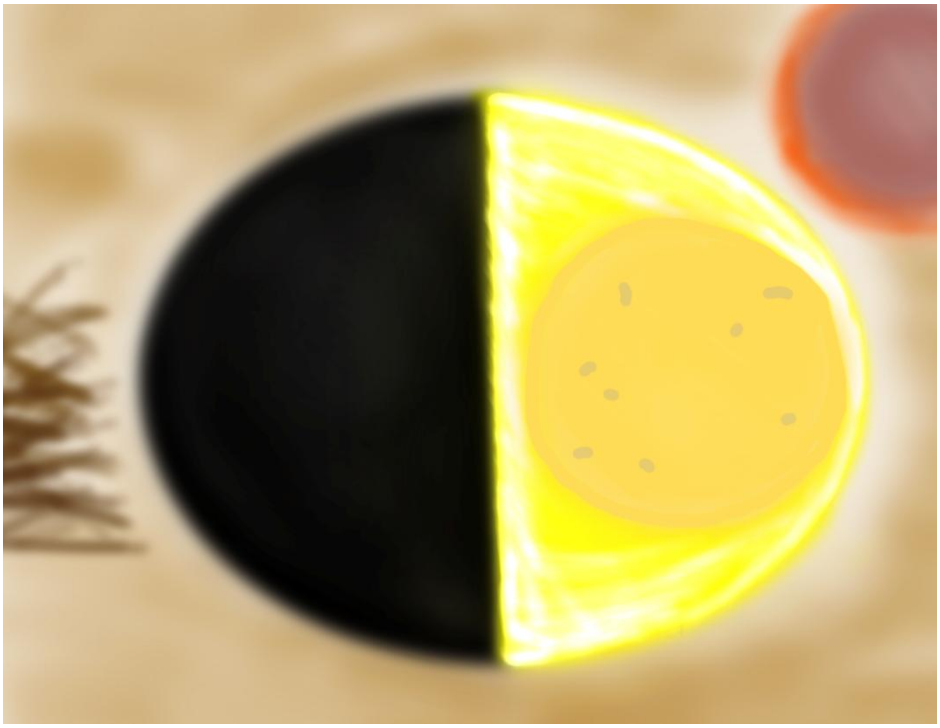
He hurriedly took out one cooking pan from the kitchen and came outside to light the fire. The cook was thoroughly scared that he would receive a scolding from the officer for the delay.

When he came out, he saw Satguru Ji working on his cooking pan. Satguru Ji had already flattened the *chapattis* and placed them on the cooking pan. Satguru Ji used to prepare heavy *chapattis*, unlike other soldiers who preferred eating light *chapattis*. Seeing the fire already lit under the cooking pan, the cook proceeded towards him greedily. Collecting the wood and lighting up the fire would have taken some time. So, he thought of using the cooking pan being used by Satguru Ji for preparing the officer's food. Further, the cook thought of taking away the *chapattis* prepared by Satguru Ji and give them to the officer. However, he noticed that Satguru Ji had prepared heavy *chapattis*, which the officer would not like. The cook decided to stop Satguru Ji from preparing the food and instead take advantage of the hot pan for himself. This was wrong because Satguru Ji had the first right (claim) on the cooking pan since he had worked on collecting the wood and lighting the fire. Moreover, Satguru Ji had already prepared the *chapattis*. Now, only baking was left. But the cook was not mindful of these considerations. He came and loudly said to Satguru Ji, 'Get aside! You prepare your food later on. I have to prepare the officer's food now. Take away your material and get aside.'

Satguru Ji replied, 'The food is already prepared. Only some baking is left. If you require these *chapattis*, take these. But removing them from the pan at this stage is equivalent to disrespecting the food'.

The cook angrily said, ‘I thought of taking your *chapattis* to give to the officer. But officer is not used to eating heavy *chapattis*. And don’t lecture me on the ‘respect of food’, I don’t agree to such considerations. Simply get away and remove your unfinished material. Else, I will throw away these *chapattis*.’

Satguru Ji cautioned the cook, ‘Come in your senses! You have no respect for food and anything else.’ Satguru Ji took out his sword and streaked a line onto the cooking pan. Placing his *chapatti* on the right side of the line, Satguru Ji said to the cook, ‘I will prepare my food here. You use the other portion.’ The cook was delighted to have escaped the work of lighting up the fire, and came forward with his material. Just as he began to prepare the dough, the cook noticed that the right side of the pan, upon which Satguru Ji was preparing *chapatti*, had turned into glistening gold.



Right side of the pan turned to gold

The left side remained black iron. Satguru Ji kept baking his *chapattis* without any surprise.

The cook got utterly surprised and frightened at the same time. He could not believe his eyes. He rubbed his eyes and looked carefully again. The shine of the half-golden pan entered his eyes and he fell backwards. He turned back, washed his face with water and again tried looking at Satguru Ji and his pan. Again, he saw Satguru Ji sitting in front of the half-golden pan, preparing his food.



The cook was surprised to see the half-golden pan

In fear, the cook ran away from there. He was breathing heavily. His sudden entry in the room awakened other soldiers. They got surprised to see the cook breathing heavily and in a state of shock. They asked him, 'What happened?'

The cook narrated the whole incident to the soldiers. Meanwhile, noticing the noise, the officer also came there. When the officer came to know of the incident, he along with other soldiers rushed to the spot and saw Satguru Ji finishing his work on the half-golden pan. All were little frightened as well as surprised. Some folded their hands, some started looking down in humility, and some hid behind the others.

Satguru Ji got up and said to the soldiers, 'Those who do not mind snatching other person's rights will never prosper. Times ahead are very difficult. Those who engage in bad and forceful activities will suffer a lot. Only those who help the poor will be saved. Guru Nanak Dev Ji has instructed never to snatch anyone's property.' The soldiers bowed down their necks and did not say a word. Satguru Ji left away.

The officer scolded the cook and referring to Satguru Ji, said, 'Didn't you know he is a pious being? Your arrogance and irresponsibility will bring us all down. I will dismiss you from the regiment right now.' The cook was deeply embarrassed. He accepted his mistake and expressed apology for his indiscipline and misbehavior with Satguru Ji.

From that day onwards, soldiers of the entire regiment started following Satguru Ji for instructions and guidance.

ਭਗਤੀ ਭਾਇ ਵਿਹੂਣਿਆ
ਮੁਹੁ ਕਾਲਾ ਪਤਿ ਖੋਇ ॥

Those who are not lovingly devoted to God lose their honor with their faces blackened.

ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਿਆ
ਅਵਗਣ ਮੁਠੀ ਰੋਇ ॥ ੧ ॥

Those who leave the Name of God are inflicted by evil, they weep and wail in dismay.

— **Guru Nanak Dev Ji**

“ Meditation is not evasion; it is a serene encounter with reality.

— Thich Nhat Hanh
(Vietnamese Buddhist monk, activist, author)

Researchers from Italy, while identifying the role of epigenetic factors, mentioned that meditation induces a state of greater inner silence, allowing the development of increased self-awareness.

Frontiers in Psychology 2020 Aug 11;11:1767.



The story is about a Sikh who came back to life after death once, and narrated his experience of the other world.

Face blackened without meditation

In *Ghoram* village, lived a Sikh named Surjit Singh. Sardar Surjit Singh was a follower of Namdhari principles. However, at one time in his life, he wandered away from his path. He gave up on meditation and started indulging in wrongful activities. Due to this, he became very sick. He got admitted to a hospital. There, his condition did not improve, but started worsening day by day. Doctors tried a lot to improve the health of Sardar Surjit Singh, but of no avail. Surjit Singh felt very depressed. He could not move, eat or sleep properly. His family members used to visit him, but he could not even properly speak to them. He felt very alone. But even in those stressful times, he could not remember God. His health did not allow him for any meaningful activity.



Surjit Singh became very sick

As every day passed by, his condition deteriorated. One day, he became very sick. All his family members came to see him that day. Due to his sickness, Surjit Singh died. His soul and and the mind (in his miniature body) left his physical body. His miniature body was then caught by the messengers of death.

Surjit Singh remembered everything, from how his soul and mind left his body and he got caught by the death messengers. Only Surjit Singh knew this, his family members sitting alongside him could not see the death messengers or the soul and mind leaving his physical body.



Surjit Singh was put in well of dirt by the death messengers

The death messengers took Surjit Singh's miniature body and plunged it into the well of dirt and slime. It was a dirty place, filled with different unpleasant smells. His face got blackened in the slime of dirt. The death messengers were now going to burn the miniature body of Surjit Singh to cause him more pain.

At this time, Satguru Partap Singh Ji sent one of his Sikhs to rescue and protect Surjit Singh. But again, the death messengers caught hold of Surjit Singh, who was rescued once again by the Satguru Ji's Sikh.

Surjit Singh accepted his mistake and promised that he would never stop regular meditation and rightful activities. Upon this promise, his soul, mind and the miniature body entered his physical body. Surjit Singh saw his family members weeping upon his death. They were highly surprised to note that Surjit Singh Ji was still alive yet.

From that day onwards, Sardar Surjit Singh always did meditation and never indulged in wrongful activities.



Surjit Singh meditated regularly and left all wrong activities thereafter

ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਮੇਟਿ ਖਿਮਾ ਗਹਿ ਰਹਹੁ ॥

One should erase duality and
hold firmly to the practice of forgiveness.

ਕਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਕੀ ਸੂਲ ਨ ਸਹਹੁ ॥ ੧ ॥

This way, one will not suffer
the impalement of actions and rituals.

— **Bhagat Kabir Ji**

“ **Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.**

— Aristotle
(Greek philosopher and polymath)

Researchers from South Africa and England unraveled the neurobiology of forgiveness and indicated that it plays a vital role in restoring social relationships, and positively impacts personal wellbeing and society at large.

Neuroscience Biobehavior Review 2020 May;112:437-451.



The following story is about the exemplary patience practiced by Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji.

The stubborn horse and the exemplary patience

One day, Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji, who was referred to as Beant Ji in his early years, was travelling in a horse cart. Beant Ji was going to the residence on the banks of *Neelon* canal. Labh Singh was steering the horse cart. On both the sides, shrubs and trees marked the boundary of the path. Beant Ji was going to the canal residence for afternoon meals. The ambience of the environment was good, although due to overhead sun, the air was hot. Labh Singh noted that in half an hour, they would reach the residence.



Beant Ji was travelling in a horse cart

However, the moving cart suddenly stopped as the horse came to a standstill, although here was no reason for the horse to stop on an empty path. There were no animals to scare it, no voices that could have indicated the presence of a dangerous animal nearby and no obstruction in the mud path ahead as well. The stopping of the horse was quite strange.



The horse stopped without any apparent reason

Labh Singh signalled the horse to start moving. But the horse did not move an inch. Labh Singh started with a gentle tapping of the horse, but to no avail. Because of the stubbornness of the horse, Labh Singh got very enraged. He felt beating the horse with a stick. Seeing his attitude, Beant Ji instructed him, "Labh Singh, you are not to beat the horse."

Beant ji and Labh Singh got down from the cart and sat away. After sometime being uneasy, Labh Singh again requested to Beant Ji, "Fifteen minutes have passed and this horse is standing here, in such a way it is not going to move. It is time for your meals too."



Labh Singh was furiousat the stubbornness of the horse

“Doesn’t matter, after all the horse would also be hungry as well," Beant Ji said very calmly.

Labh Singh kept mum. But seeing the growing uneasiness upon his face, Beant Ji again directed, "Don't worry, when it would move with its own sweet will, we would move then. You are not to treat the horse rudely."

‘Alright’ said Labh Singh, but when half an hour passed then he could not control himself and said, "Without beating, it would not move."

"No, you would not beat it." Beant Ji again instructed.

Labh Singh again traced back his steps.

After about forty five minutes, the horse again started moving. Beant Ji and Labh Singh sat on the cart.

Labh Singh was mesmerized to note the extraordinary patience of Beant Ji. He bowed his head and with folded hands, pleaded to Beant Ji, "*Maharaj*, you are great. I would have beaten the horse very badly, but your compassion is unique. In spite of the stubbornness of the horse, you did not get irritated even a bit. Your forgiveness is exemplary".

ਖਿਮਾ ਗਹੀ ਬ੍ਰਤੁ ਸੀਲ ਸੰਤੋਖੰ ॥

To practice forgiveness is the true fast, good conduct and contentment.

ਰੋਗੁ ਨ ਬਿਆਪੈ ਨਾ ਜਮ ਦੋਖੰ ॥

This way, neither the disease nor the pain of death inflicts one.

— **Guru Nanak Dev Ji**

“ To err is human; to forgive, divine.

— Alexander Pope
(English poet)

Researchers from Spain elucidated that forgiveness enhances positive states associated with satisfaction with life, subjective happiness, and psychological wellbeing.

Journal of Clinical Medicine. 2021 Apr 26;10(9):1866



The following story is about a Sikh, who forgave and took care of the person who had injured him earlier.

The quarrelsome man and forgiveness

In the city of Amritsar, is a *Gurudwara* named Lohgarh Sahib. A Namdhari Sikh named Attar Singh went to visit the *Gurudwara* and pay homage to the Guru. He was all be himself. A Nihung Singh, who was following him and started questioning Attar Singh about his unique dress. Attar Singh explained that he belonged to the Namdhari sect. Attar Singh told that in his belief system, white color is very important and the dress as well as the turban is always of white color. The Nihang Singh did not listen to a word of Attar Singh and started abusing him.



A Nihung Singh entered into a quarrel with Attar Singh

Attar Singh ignored him and started following the path to the *Gurudwara*. But Nihung Singh followed him and resumed the quarrel. He asked Attar Singh to leave the premises. But Attar Singh wanted to pay homage to the Satguru. He continued on his path and did not mind the quarrelsome man. Angered by this, the Nihung Singh took a stick and struck the head of Attar Singh. Attar Singh fell to ground and started bleeding. After some time, he regained his senses, stood up and went away.

Attar Singh took treatment for his head wound and in a few days, resumed his normal activities. After a few months, an infection spread in the city area. Whosoever caught the infection suffered badly from loose stool. The infection drained away the energy of those who got infected. Attar Singh was very mindful of his hygiene and he was healthy. He used to go out early in the morning to answer the nature's call. One day, when he went out, he found that the same Nihung Singh, who had beaten and wounded him, lay unconscious on the ground due to infection.

With good amount of effort, Attar Singh brought the unconscious Nihung Singh to his home. He administered medicine to the sick man and took care of his needs, while he was unconscious.

Due to the effort and care by Attar Singh, the health of Nihung Singh finally improved and he regained his consciousness. When the Nihung Singh opened his eyes, he was surprised to see himself in an unknown house. He saw Attar Singh and could recall that Attar Singh was indeed the same man whom he had beaten and wounded a few months back. The Nihung Singh became really scared and thought that he would be beaten in revenge by Attar Singh.

Seeing the uncomfortable and frightened looks of the Nihung Singh, Attar Singh placed his hand on the Nihung Singh's hand and comforted him.



Attar Singh comforted and took care of the Nihung Singh

Attar Singh told him how he had gone unconscious and Attar Singh had brought him to his home for care.

The Nihung Singh was moved emotionally by the benevolent behavior of Attar Singh. Nihung Singh could not believe that such people also exist in the world, who do not strike back in revenge, rather take care of their rivals. This was an eye opener for the Nihung Singh. He simply could not hold back his tears and was really ashamed of his mean behavior earlier.

Nihung Singh heartily thanked Attar Singh and asked him, ‘Who is your Guru, who has taught you such a godly conduct?’
Attar Singh replied, ‘My Guru is Satguru Ram Singh’.
‘Please make me also a disciple of Satguru Ram Singh’, replied the Nihung Singh!

ਆਪਸ ਕਉ ਜੋ ਭਲਾ ਕਹਾਵੈ ॥

One who calls himself good

ਤਿਸਹਿ ਭਲਾਈ ਨਿਕਟਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ॥

Goodness does come to such an egoistic person

— **Guru Arjan Dev Ji**

"The weak are dominated by their ego, the wise dominate their ego, and the intelligent are in a constant struggle against their ego.

— Hamza Yusuf
(American scholar)

A study in USA demonstrated the deleterious effects of reactive egoism in social interactions and highlighted the importance of cooperation for eradicating egoism.

Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 2006; 91(5):872-89.



The following story is about a boy who bragged his achievements egoistically. He learnt the harmful effects of his ego in a short while.

Show off by an egoistic boy

Mohan Das was an egoistic boy. He was good at studies, but he was very proud of himself. He looked down upon other boys and girls of his class. He thought that it is because of his hard work and intelligence that he is good at studies, while the other students are doomed and will never be happy in their lives. He did not mingle or play with other students of his class. He used to remain alone and never talked to others.



Mohan Das leaned against a flag post on an open platform to show-off his medals.

After coming back home from school, he used to visit a park nearby. But he did not use to play with other kids as he thought that they are inferior to him in studies. He, at all times, used to wear three medals that he had was awarded for his grades in school. He used to show off his medals. There was a flag post in the park, which was on a raised platform. He used to go to that area, rise up the platform and lean against the flag post. He used to go there so that others can notice him and his medals.

The clothes that he wore had various tags written on it, like 'Wonder boy', 'I am the Best, 'Topper', etc.

Because of his rude and egoistic behavior, other kids started moving away from him. They still often asked Mohan Das to come and join them, and requested him to help them at their studies, but Mohan Das would outrightly reject. He wanted that only he should be the best, and all others should fail.

One day, like always, Mohan Das was leaning alongside the flag post with crossed arms and was flagging his medals, while others were playing in the garden. Suddenly, a hungry wolf came there from the nearby forest. The wolf took everyone by surprise. All the kids immediately hid themselves. In the rush, Mohan Das also came down the stairs of the raised platform and managed to hide himself.

The wolf looked here and there for a prey, for someone to kill and eat. All the kids had hid themselves. There was pin-drop silence everywhere. The wolf was disappointed to note that he could find no prey. He started moving out of the garden. Mohan Das had a sigh of relief. But suddenly, his medals touched each other and the sound of metal medals alerted the wolf again. He turned back and started moving to the location where Mohan Das was hiding.

Mohan Das's heart sank. He cursed himself for his egoism. He wondered to himself that had he not bragged of his studies by wearing the medals, he would have been saved from the sharp clutches of the wolf.



The wolf noted the sound of medals clinging and approached Mohan Das to eat him

In the meantime, the wolf came dangerously close. Mohan Das covered his head with his hands, waiting for his eventual fate. Just at that moment, the guards came and fired gunshots in air to scare the wolf. Hearing the gunshots, the wolf turned back and sped away towards the forest.

Mohan Das could not believe his luck. He thanked God for having forgiven him. He removed his medals and kept them inside the show-case of his home. He expressed apologies to his friends and from that day onwards, he became friendly with all and stopped bragging about his achievements. On the other hand, now he also helped his friends in studies, started playing with them and happily became a good kid once again.

ਜਿਨ ਕਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਹਰਿ ਸੇਤੀ
ਤੇ ਸਾਕਤ ਮੂੜ ਨਰ ਕਾਚੇ ॥

Those who are not lovingly attached to God are foolish,
false and of low conduct,

ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਜਨਮੁ ਮਰਣੁ ਅਤਿ ਭਾਰੀ
ਵਿਚਿ ਵਿਸਟਾ ਮਰਿ ਮਰਿ ਪਾਚੇ ॥ ੨ ॥

They suffer the extreme torture of life and death,
and rot repeatedly in filth.

— **Guru Ram Das Ji**

“Mastering others is strength. Mastering yourself is true power.

— Lao Tzu
(Chinese philosopher and writer)

Researchers from Canada discovered that the psychological experience of power enhances moral awareness among those with a strong moral identity, yet decreases the moral awareness among those with a weak moral identity

Journal of Applied Psychology. 2012 May; 97(3):681-9.



The following story is about Birbal, who although very intelligent in materialism, was poor in spirituality. He failed to see the world beyond material resources and eventually met his end.

Birbal's arrogance and ultimate fate

Birbal was widely known for his intelligence. He was a favorite of Emperor Akbar and was the most influential minister in his court. Akbar never turned down any proposal given by Birbal. Birbal too, never missed any opportunity to impress Akbar.

In lieu of his services, Birbal requested Akbar that he be given the authority to collect five rupees as tax, whenever a wedding took place amongst the business community of *Khatris*, *Banias* and *Aroras*. Already impressed with Birbal, Akbar granted him the authority to collect five rupees as tax during the weddings.

In a bid to further impress Akbar, Birbal offered his services for a military campaign in Baluchistan. Akbar was even more impressed to see the enthusiasm of Birbal. While going for this expedition, Birbal arrived at Goindwal on his way. There, he met the third Guru, Satguru Amar Das Ji.

Birbal saw the charity work of highest level being done in Goindwal. Birbal saw that Satguru Amar Das Ji had taken the tradition of *langar* (community food) to newer heights. People from far-off places used to come to consume *langar*. No money used to be taken from the people for the food served to them. Everywhere, this unique tradition was being praised. However, although very intelligent in worldly materialism, Birbal was poor in the domain of spirituality. All that mattered to money-minded Birbal was the right to collect tax during marriages. So, he asked Satguru Amar Das Ji to give him tax for each marriage performed in the Sikh circles too.



Birbal wanted to extract money illegally

Seeing the arrogance and money mindedness of Birbal, Satguru Amar Das ji replied 'With the grace of Guru Nanak, we won't pay tax even to the messenger of death! Who are you to collect tax from us? However, the *langar* is freely available. You may take as much as you want'.

Birbal was infuriated. He said, 'Can you feed the whole army?'

'It all depends on the will of God', Satguru Ji said humbly.

The whole army sat down and food was served to all. Everyone ate to the brim, yet there was no shortage at all. Everyone was surprised.

Meanwhile, some people poisoned the ears of Birbal that Satguru Ji has a special power due to which the food never ends.

Birbal thought that there would be no limit of Akbar's happiness if he could get the magical power that Satguru Ji possesses.
So, he said to Satguru Ji, 'Give to me the power, by which you do not face any shortage of food.'
Satguru Ji replied, 'We only have the power of God's Name. All other resources are fake.'
But the adamant Birbal denied accepting any logic. Instead, he threatened and said, 'I am going to an expedition. When I return from there, I will invade this place also and turn it to a pile of ashes.'
Saying this, he left in anger.
Satguru Ji was not disturbed at all by this. The Sikhs prayed that an arrogant and unfaithful person like Birbal should not remain capable of coming to the place of Guru ever again.
This prayer got fulfilled. During the war, Birbal got injured and could never turn to Goindwal again. Later, in the battle of Sindh, the arrogant Birbal got killed by the Yousufzai Pathans.



Birbal's life ended in quest for more material wealth.

ਸਰਣਾਗਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ ਜਨ ਆਏ
ਤਿਨ ਕੀ ਪੈਜ ਸਵਾਰੀ ॥

Those like *Prahlad* who sought the refuge of God,
God protected their honor.

ਅਲਖ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਏਕੋ ਵਰਤੈ
ਏਕਾ ਜੋਤਿ ਮੁਰਾਰੀ ॥

The Immaculate, invisible God pervades everywhere
and in everyone.

— **Guru Ram Das Ji**

“ **Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays.**

— Soren Kierkegaard
(Danish theologian)

Researchers from Canada discovered that a focus on God’s love and forgiveness fosters well-being due to the cumulative result of being less distressed when things go wrong.

Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience. 2015 Mar;10(3):357-63.



The following story is about Prahlad, for whom the love of God was supreme. Prahlad opposed his father when he faced away from reality and starting torturing the public.

Prahlad's prayer and his protection

Once there was a mighty king named Harnaksh. He went to the extremes of meditation to impress Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva, pleased with the great meditation of Harnaksh, revealed himself in front of him. Lord Shiva ordered Harnaksh to ask for a blessing. Harnaksh did extreme meditation in the hope for a blessing. Now, it was time for him to ask for one. Harnaksh wanted to be all-powerful. So, he asked Lord Shiva that he be made so powerful, such that he could not be killed inside or outside. He could not be killed by a man or by an animal. He could not be killed during day or night. He could not die in heat or cold. Lord Shiva granted Harnaksh the blessing that he asked for.

Harnaksh thought that now it would not be possible for any power on earth or beyond to kill him. This made him very egoistic. He started thinking that he himself is the God. He became so proud of himself that he started forcing others to chant and celebrate his name, rather than the Name of God. He became very cruel. People were afraid of his terror.

Harnaksh had a beautiful kid named Prahlad. Prahlad was the devotee of God. He considered only the God to be supreme. He knew that God has created everyone, including his father. So, he chanted and celebrated the Name of God, rather than his father's. Hence, while others chanted the name of Harnaksh, the son of Harnaksh chanted the Name of God. Seeing Prahlad absorbed in the devotion of God at all times, his friends and other kids also got encouraged to chant the Name of God.

When the news reached the ears of Harnaksh that his own son does not chant his name, he got worried that like Prahlad, others might start opposing him as well. His ego couldn't let that happen. So, Harnaksh prepared his mind to either mould or kill Prahlad. He insisted Prahlad to stop chanting God's Name and instead, chant his name. But Prahlad did not agree.



Prahlad was a devotee of God

Harnakash made many attempts to get his son killed, but every time Prahlad was miraculously saved by the God. Harnaksh got disappointed every time Prahlad got saved, in spite of the best efforts by Harnaksh to kill him. Harnaksh got so angry that he ordered his soldiers to heat a pillar with fire. The soldiers kept on heating the pillar continuously. The color of pillar became red hot. Its heat and flares were being felt even from a distance. Harnaksh ordered Prahlad to hug the pillar in order to test his faith in God. Prahlad got scared. He had never seen a red hot pillar earlier. How could he hug it?

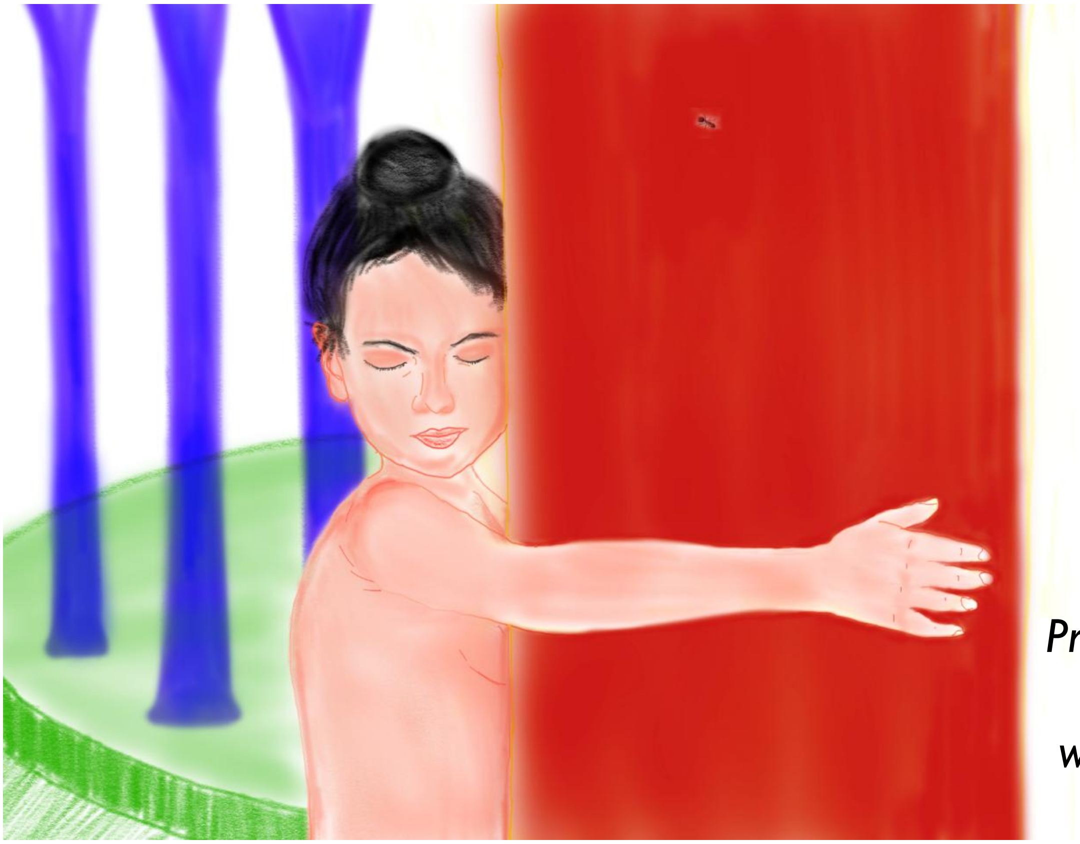
Prahlad closed his eyes, remembered God and prayed, 'O, God! Only You can protect me in this dire situation! I have no one else except You.'



When he opened his eyes and saw the pillar, he noticed that an ant was moving on the pillar. Prahlad thought to himself, 'If the ant is not feeling any heat from the pillar, how could the pillar burn him?'

Prahlad saw an ant moving harmlessly on the red hot pillar

Actually, God had assumed the form of an ant and was moving on the pillar to signal to Prahlad that nothing would happen to him. Prahlad immediately rushed to the pillar and hugged it tightly. Instead of burning the skin of Prahlad, the red hot pillar appeared cold as ice to him.



Prahlad hugged the red hot pillar without any worry

While this incident had a positive effect on others who were surprised and happy to see Prahlad having accomplished such an impossible task, Harnaksh got more infuriated. He took a club and struck the pillar hard in anger. Now, God appeared from the pillar in the form of a man lion called Nar Singh. Nar Singh caught hold of Harnaksh and took him to a doorway. He told Harnaksh "Look around! It is neither day nor night, it is dusk. I am neither a man nor an animal. We are neither inside nor outside, we are on the threshold of a doorway." Harnaksh was surprised to find out that such circumstances had arisen where despite the Shiva's blessings, he could still be killed. He agreed that indeed, all the conditions of his blessing had been met. Nar Singh used his claws to tear the chest of Harnaksh to kill him, so that the innocent people and devotees are saved from the wrath and terror of Harnaksh forever.



Nar Singh, the incarnation of God, killed Harnaksh to save Prahlad and free people from the torture of a cruel king

ਡਡਾ ਡਰ ਉਪਜੇ ਡਰੁ ਜਾਈ ॥

When the fear of God comes (in mind),
fear of others dispel away.

ਤਾ ਡਰ ਮਹਿ ਡਰੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਈ ॥

Fear of others is subordinate to the fear of God.

— **Bhagat Kabir Ji**

The only God-ordained fear is the fear of God, and if we fear Him, we don't have to fear anyone or anything else.

— Mark Batterson
(American pastor and author)

Researchers from USA and Germany discovered that religion (*God's fear is implicit in it*) plays a strong role in sanctioning, and probably also monitoring, in a wide variety of cooperative contexts.

Religion, Brain & Behavior, 6:2, 95-111



The following story is about Namdhari Sikhs, who feared God and no one else. As they were themselves fearless, they worked to raise the conscience of people to end the shackles of slavery.

God fearing Sikhs

Namdhari Sikhs follow the pristine principles of Sikhism and fear only God. Namdhari Sikhs raised their voice against the bad things in the society. When the entire India had accepted the superiority of the bad British rule, Namdhari Sikhs under the guidance of Satguru Ram Singh Ji, challenged the British authority. They refused to accept the wrong laws of the British.

The British had started and supported the slaughter of innocent cows. In order to stop this, Namdhari Sikhs attacked the perpetuators of this crime. Namdhari Sikhs wanted to raise the conscience of common people, so that together they can offer resistance to the British rule. Hence, after killing the people involved in slaughter of animals, they surrendered, so that during a subsequent investigation, their concerns become known to all people. But the British and their stooges were afraid that if all people come to know about the courage and sentiments of Namdhari Sikhs, a big revolt may happen. So, they took the captured Kooka Sikhs to the Malerkotla ground and prepared to blow them away by cannon fire.

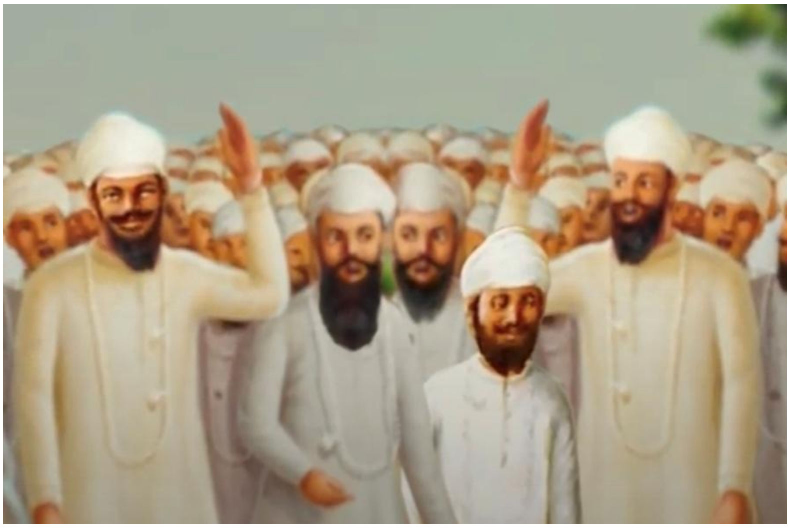
Namdhari Sikhs woke up early, did meditation, recited *Gurbani* and praised the Guru. They did not fear the death.

After some time, the cannons started firing in Malerkotla. The British thought that the Namdhari Sikhs would pray to spare their lives. But they were surprised to see that the Namdhari Sikhs waited anxiously for their turn and wanted to come in front of the cannons earlier than others.

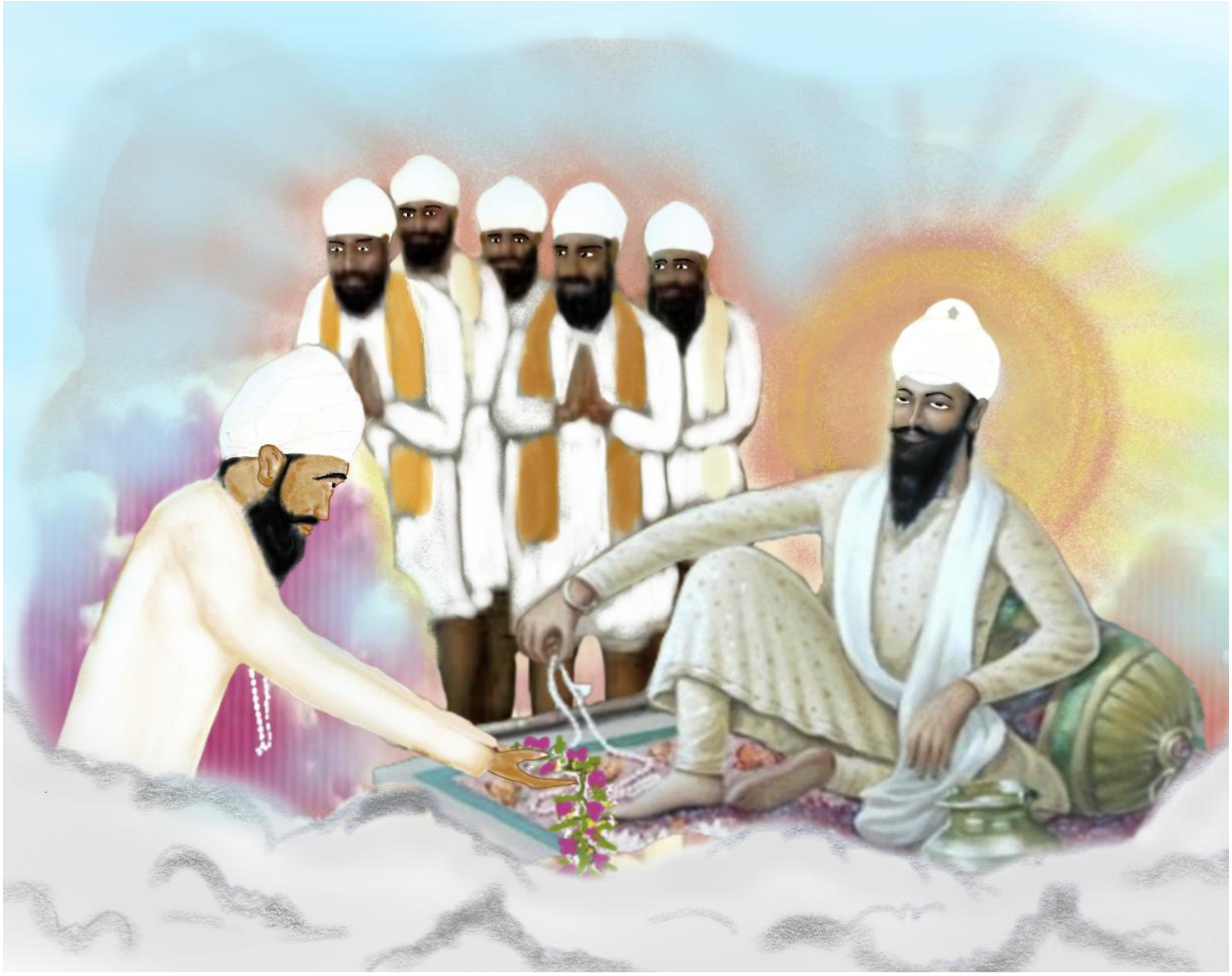


The British stooges fired cannons at Namdhari Sikhs

Namdhari Sikhs did not worry at all about their lives. They sacrificed their lives for the sake of downtrodden people. They could see that whoever gets killed, reaches the *durbar* of Satguru Ram Singh. Hence, they wanted to reach in the dear service of Satguru Ji as soon as possible. Because of the devotion to Satguru Ji, they did not fear death at all. The kept the fear of God inside them and because of God's fear, their all other fears disappeared.



*Even after knowing that they will finally be killed, Namdhari Sikhs said, '**All this is the wonder of Guru Ram Singh!**'.*



Namdhari Sikhs were eager to reach in the eternal service of Satguru Ram Singh Ji as soon as possible. They anxiously waited for their turn to be blown away and wanted to go in front of cannon fire earlier than others.

Even the British stooges noted the exemplary conduct of Namdhari Sikhs at Malerkotla. Niaz Ali Hussain (*Naib Nazim* of Amargarh) described the happenings of the event and the conduct of Kooka Sikhs to Mir Muhammad Qasim dated 30th January 1872, in the following words:

“These people are fully absorbed in their religion and do not fear at all from the death…When the Kooka Sikhs were being blown away by the cannons, then although they had understood that they would finally die, even then they considered Guru Ram Singh as their leader and said that ‘All this is the wonder of Guru Ram Singh’. Guru Ram Singh has scored higher than the earlier spiritual guides.”

Niaz Ali Hussain
30.1.1872